

**Remarks**

Claims 1-8 are pending in the application. Claims 1-6 are rejected. Claims 7 and 8 are objected to.

**Objections to the drawings**

Withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested in view of the amendments to the specification set forth above.

**Objections to the specification**

Withdrawal of the objections to the specification is respectfully requested in view of the amendments thereto set forth above.

**Claim objections**

Withdrawal of the objection to claim 3 is respectfully requested in view of the amendment thereto set forth above.

**Claim rejections**

**Section 112**

Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 4 under 35 USC 112, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph is respectfully requested in view of the amendment to claim 4 set forth above.

**Section 102**

Claims 1, 3, 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Mitsutani (US 5,875,628). The Applicant respectfully traverses. Mitsutani cannot support the asserted rejection for at least the reason that Mitsutani does not disclose "wherein the control apparatus ... inhibits the fuel cutoff control until the learning is stabilized when learning of the stored learning value is performed after the stored learning value is cleared."

The Examiner cites Mitsutani at col. 12, lines 7-9 as disclosing the above-noted feature. The Applicant respectfully disagrees. The cited portion only discloses that an A/F (air/fuel ratio) sensor characteristic learning process is performed only when a

voltage amplitude (VP) of the A/F sensor output is within a prescribed range. This is not the equivalent of the noted feature of claim 1.

Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable over Mitsutani. Therefore, claims 3, 5 and 6 are likewise allowable over Mitsutani for at least the reason that they depend on claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 3, 5 and 6 as being anticipated by Mitsutani is therefore respectfully requested.

Section 103

Claim 2 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mitsutani in view of Masanobu (JP 08-284715). The Applicant respectfully traverses. Claim 2 depends on claim 1, which is allowable over Mitsutani as discussed above. Masanobu does not remedy the deficiencies in Mitsutani with respect to claim 1, and therefore claim 1 is further allowable over the combination of Mitsutani and Masanobu. Accordingly, claim 2 is likewise allowable over the combination of Mitsutani and Masanobu for at least the reason that it depends on claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 2 is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim objections

Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 7 and 8 is respectfully requested in view of the allowability of claim 1 as discussed above.

Conclusion

In light of the above discussion, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in all aspects in allowable condition, and earnestly solicits favorable reconsideration and early issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (202) 220-4323 to discuss any matter concerning this application. The Office is authorized to charge any fees related to this communication to Deposit Account No. 11-0600.

Respectfully submitted,

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